

concise. There is not one mention of endogenous and exogenous depression, although the author does try to explain bipolar and other DSM III categories.

The author focuses on the signs and symptoms of depression. Topics covered include physical complaints, emotional and thinking difficulties; what to do for someone who is depressed, even if they don't want help; a very brief account of what treatments are available; why depression, which the author calls the "great medical masquerader," is often frequently misdiagnosed; the difference between depression and Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, and other diseases of the elderly; why medicines can cause depression; and differing forms of treatment, including the identification and description of various medicines (e.g., tricyclic antidepressants, lithium, tranquilizers, Monoamine Oxidase, etc.).

The main strength of the book is the straightforward description of depression and how it affects older people. Here the author uses a number of anecdotes to illustrate points. For example, an account of a 74-year-old woman's bereavement is used to show the differences between normal and abnormal reactions.

The most notable weakness of the book is that there is too little advice given on how to cope with depression. Among the psycho-therapeutic approaches discussed, the author only describes the psychodynamic, behavioural, cognitive, and group therapies. Interestingly, while the author mentions that 75% of patients who enter these sorts of therapies, which he calls "talk therapies," are successfully treated, there is little space given to how and why these forms of treatment work. Only the psychodynamic approach rates more than one paragraph, either reflecting a medical bias or lack of knowledge about therapeutic approaches on the part of the author.

I thought the last chapter of the book on the family would reveal some solutions or ideas about how family members could help, but I was disappointed. The author briefly describes how family therapy works, but there is little insight offered into what the family can do. There are some examples of how families have coped, but little else.

*To be old and sad* . . . offers some practical insights into understanding depression, but I would only recommend it if you desire a book that briefly outlines depression in older people. It offers little information for the practitioner, although it does give clear explanations to lay professionals. There are a number of other self help books that are far superior and spend more time giving solutions and ideas on coping with depression rather than explaining yet again what depression is and why it occurs.

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De Frain, J., Fricke, J., and Elmen, J. (1987). *On our own: a single parent's survival guide*. Lexington, Massachusetts: D. C. Heath and Company.

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*Reviewed by:* Anne Saunders, University of Victoria

The authors present, from a positive perspective, critical issues involved in divorce and child custody. The issues are derived from case material gathered during a ten-year period of studying divorce from both research and clinical perspectives. Admittedly, the authors prefer the latter perspective for its

insights into the emotional upheaval of divorce as well as into parents' diverse strategies for coping. However, an attempt is made to differentiate between statements made from each of the two perspectives.

Chapter 2 primarily concerns a questionnaire study developed by the authors. The goal of the study was to compare the effects of joint custody, sole custody, and split custody on the post-divorce adjustment of parents and children. Previous research on children, parents and divorce throughout the United States is also presented. In addition, a brief history of child custody is outlined.

In the main body of *On Our Own* (Chapters 3 to 6), the practical issues of divorce and child custody are poignantly illustrated by the personal experiences of over one thousand single parents. Through these illustrations, the single parent reader may be able to validate his or her own experiences, as well as select information and advice. In a down-to-earth example, one father urges other single fathers to quickly acquire skills for meeting new responsibilities, specifically not to "... put off learning how to make ponytails" (p. 123).

In Chapter 7, the authors conclude that maternal sole custody, paternal sole custody, split custody, and joint custody are all potentially successful child custody options. Thus, it is not the structure of the family but rather the quality of interaction within the family which is the crucial issue. A semi-structured process is proposed for guiding parents in selecting an appropriate child custody arrangement from among the available options.

Suggested resources for single parents are provided in an Appendix. These include a reading list for parents and children; and information on support groups, counsellors, and social services.

The outstanding strength of *On Our Own* is the humanistic approach of the authors. First, sampling as well as self-report biases are acknowledged and the readers are encouraged to evaluate the results of the questionnaire study for themselves. Second, the authors resist the temptation to write more of their own words, instead favouring the direct testimony of single parents. Third, the authors treat humorously their own original assumptions which later proved to be incorrect. Fourth, the authors realize the limitations of current knowledge in the area of divorce and child custody. For example, only time will tell the long-term effects of divorce on a child. Finally, in summing up, the authors leave the reader with something to think about, "Perhaps human beings fool themselves by reaching for happiness, anyway. Life should be instead the search for manageable challenges" (p. 257).

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Corby, L. and Clark, P. D. (1984). *You're Somebody — How To Be a Slim Kid and Somebody's Companion*. Saskatoon: Fifth House Publishing.

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*Reviewed by:* Marie L. Hoskins, University of Victoria

*You're Somebody* and *Somebody's Companion* are a set of books written for parents who are trying to help their children to control their diets. *You're Somebody* is the child's workbook and addresses the child directly, whereas *Somebody's Companion*